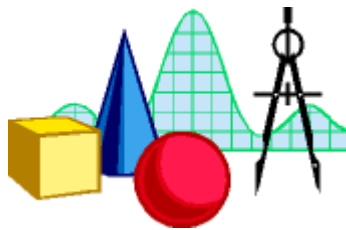


A Mosaic of Knowledge: An Evaluation of The Community Consortium Grants Program, 2001-2002

Arts in Education Program
Washington State Arts Commission

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Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D.
1 El Vedado Lane, #31
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
805-682-1731
msikesphd@earthlink.net

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Using this Report

This report is divided into the following sections:

Findings at a Glance: thumbnail summaries providing quick insight into the conclusions of this report and indexed to the sections in the report where they are elaborated.

Introduction: background on the program.

Conclusions or Evaluation findings:

- Deepening Standards-Based Education
- Building Local Partnerships
- Meeting Community Needs
- Building Local Intellectual Capital
- Using Evaluation to Learn
- Building Sustainability
- Reflecting National Trends

Recommendations: suggested next steps for varied stakeholders based on the conclusions.

The Evaluation Process: a general description of the methods used in the evaluation.

To review the major findings of the evaluation, the reader may want to go directly to page 15. However, for those readers who want to know how the evaluation was conducted, a review of the section that begins on page 47 may be useful.

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Findings at a Glance

1. Deepening Standards-based Education. The grants are helping communities build their capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts. There are significant examples of all the major components necessary to the teaching of these standards, including thoughtful curriculum development, teacher and artist training, and cutting-edge assessment. In this regard, these grants are rendering an important service to standards-based education, a central focus of over 14 years of federal and state education reform and a linchpin of landmark federal legislation, including *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and *No Child Left Behind*. Refer to **page 15** for a fuller discussion of this critical role.

2. Building Local Partnerships. The program is developing partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members. These partnerships are increasing their capacity to more fully use their communities' resources. These partnerships can provide help to schools and teachers who often lack the expertise or resources to teach the arts. Go to **page 25** for a discussion of this effect.

3. Meeting Community Needs. The grantees' communities are developing strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students. Meeting the needs of local communities is a key goal of the program and an important component of education reform; thus, this is also a finding with significant implications. Go to **page 28** for a discussion of this effect.

4. Building Local Intellectual Capital. The program is developing local expertise in arts education, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects. The benefits of such mentoring and professional development are particularly important, in that they are likely to transcend the immediate effects of the program. See **page 32** for a further discussion.

5. Using Evaluation to Learn. The program is bringing about significant improvement in the use of data from evaluation and assessment to enhance programming and instruction. The improvement of both student learning and program design can only take place when data from careful, thoughtful evaluation and student assessment are actively used for planning. Many of the grantees are doing this. See **page 37**.

6. Building Sustainability. The program is helping build community awareness, support, and advocacy mechanisms that support the Essential Learning Requirements. The next steps in this process should include a deepening alignment among all the critical

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elements: standards, curriculum, assessment, partnerships, community involvement, and communication of results. See **page 39**.

7. Reflecting National Trends. The data that emerge from this evaluation demonstrate that the program is reflecting important national trends and findings in arts education, in education reform in general, and specifically in curriculum, assessment, and standards-based instruction. See **page 41**.

Introduction

In 1999, the Arts in Education (AIE) Program of the Washington State Arts Commission (WSAC) implemented an ambitious program: the Community Consortium Grants. This program was designed to foster sustainable, local programs that would encourage the collaboration of arts organizations and schools. A key element of this program is to help students meet Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) in the arts.

In 2002, WSAC contracted with Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D., a consultant, to conduct an evaluation of this program as it concludes its third year, 2001-2002. This report presents findings of that evaluation.

Background of the Program

The Community Consortium Grants program is administered through the Arts in Education Program of the Washington State Arts Commission, the state agency of Washington responsible for supporting the arts and culture. The agency's strategic plan charges WSAC to:

- Expand support for arts organizations and artists in communities statewide
- Support locally determined needs across the state
- Strengthen the arts as part of Washington students' education from kindergarten through high school graduation
- Sustain equity and diversity in WSAC funding and programs
- Develop traditional and folk arts as part of Washington's cultural heritage

History of the Program

The Community Consortia Award Program was approved by the Washington State Arts Commission at its 1998 meeting, as a new program designed to go beyond existing AIE programs that focused on artists' residencies in schools. Its purpose was to "help communities develop strong arts programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students, while utilizing community resources to help schools implement the state's essential academic learning requirements in the arts." (AIE publication, Spring 1999)

The program involves the competitive award of grants to consortia or partnerships among schools, community organizations, and individual artist-educators. The partnership role is critical, and should reflect a natural alignment of resources and needs. In 2001-2002, the program awarded 29 grants. The total grants funded in the program in FY 2002 totaled \$552,671, with cash matches totaling 927,870 and grant awards ranging from 9,000 to 35,000.

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The types of grantees and partnerships funded under the Consortium Program include a wide variety of organizations and schools allied with one another. Lead applicants included local education agencies (school districts), local arts organizations, other community non-profits, and individual artists. Grants supported partnerships with one or two additional organizations or over two-dozen separate partners.

The kinds of activities were equally diverse. Different applicants focused on integrating the arts, instructing students through extended residencies, teacher and artist training, and curriculum development.

A key element of the program is the focus on alignment with the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts. These are a set of state standards, developed in the midst of a nationwide wave of standards-based education reform that saw nearly every state develop these critical criteria for what students should know and be able to do.

The EALRs are part of education reform in Washington that goes back to 1993. Like all standards, the EALRs consist of overall statements of student knowledge and skills, as in the following examples:¹

1. The student understands and applies Arts knowledge and skills. To meet this standard, the student:

Benchmark 1	Benchmark 2	Benchmark 3
1.3 Understands and applies arts styles from various artists, cultures and times		
Identifies specific attributes of art works of various artists, cultures, and times using arts vocabulary	Applies techniques from various artists, cultures, and/or times	Transfers understandings from one artistic style to a larger group of artworks

The EALRs are further articulated in grade-level frameworks. In some cases, these consist of statements of procedural knowledge or skills:

Grade 3	Dance	Music	Theatre	Visual Arts
1. The student understands and applies arts knowledge and skills.				
1.1.1 Understands arts concepts and vocabulary: <i>Elements</i>	Maintains a steady beat to music (time) Creates symmetrical/asymmetrical shapes with the body (space)	Reads, writes, and creates using rhythms including half and whole notes and rests (rhythm) Understands and uses crescendo/decrescendo (expression)	Identifies character traits of the main character(s) Identifies differences between real and fantasy settings	Uses line to create details Recognizes the relationship between 2D shape and 3D form, e.g. circle/ sphere

¹ All examples of EALRs are excerpted from the Washington OSPI Website.

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In other cases, the statements describe cognitive processes:

2. The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.	
2.1 Applies a creative process in the arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conceptualizes the context or purpose• Gathers information from diverse sources• Develops ideas and techniques• Organizes arts elements, forms, and/or principles into a creative work• Reflects for the purpose of elaboration and self evaluation• Refines work based on feedback• Presents work to others	Applies previously learned arts concepts, vocabulary, skills, and techniques through a creative process

Evaluation of the Consortium Program: The Evaluation Tool Kit

In the program's inception, Michael Sikes and Patti Frinzi were contracted to develop an overall process for evaluating the program. Their work was designed to build sustainable evaluation capacity through tools that grantees could use with a minimum of technical assistance. The result was the *Evaluation Tool Kit*®, an interactive, Web-based document that included survey templates, decision trees for selecting evaluation tools, tips for analyzing data, and so on. The *Tool Kit* was accessible to all grantees—and in fact, to any users—from the AIE section of WSAC's Website.

The Program in Action: Formative Evaluation

The first two years of the program (1999-2000 and 2000-2001) were the subjects of extensive evaluations by consultant Rebecca Severeide, Ph.D. Among the findings from her second report were the following:

- A number of program aspects were working effectively, including:
 - Mentorships involving artists and teachers
 - Culturally diverse and inclusive programming
 - Administrative changes to support the arts [in schools]
- A number of key challenges remained, including:
 - Coordinating planning and scheduling [between partners]
 - Involving partners who may lack buy-in

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Her recommendations were:

- Revise guidelines to include narrative sections on governance and philosophy
- Conduct a case study of two or three successful consortia

Definitions of Terms

Evidence: Data, documentation, or other information that confirms some evaluation finding or that answers a question

Formative: Evaluation that takes place at an intermediate stage of a program, to assess progress.

Outcomes: Impacts or effects of a program on specific populations.

Summative: Evaluation that takes place at a later or mature stage of a program, to assess outcomes.

This report builds on and acknowledges the work of Dr. Severeide, as well as the contributions of the many individual grantees who provided data through their own evaluation efforts. As noted, the Severeide reports have generally focused on the program's contributions to such characteristics as sustainability of community partnerships, the successful implementation of the programs, and major challenges overcome. As such, they provide valuable *formative* insight (see the box, Definitions of Terms) into the program's interim results, an appropriate focus of the first two years.

Moving beyond the formative approach of the first two years, this report provides a *summative* view. Based on the fact that the Community Consortium Grants Program has had three years of implementation, it is appropriate that this evaluation focus on *outcomes*. These are the impacts or effects that the program is having as a result of its activities.

Why are outcomes important at this juncture in the program? Perhaps the most important reasons are:

- The program cycle has had sufficient time for measurable results to appear. There is not an exact point when this statement can safely be made; however, every program reaches a point of maturity where results are likely.
- The political climate in our nation increasingly demands outcomes. Governmental agencies at all levels, as well as nonprofits such as the United Way, have increasingly focused on outcomes that are documented and supported by evidence.
- Under the aegis of the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation, schools and districts are under increasing pressure to demonstrate student progress in meeting state standards. Schools that do not make progress face sanctions in terms of monetary support and staff tenure.
- These pressures, ironically, face the countervailing weight of desperate economic conditions in most states. Washington is no exception. A budgetary crisis threatens many of the support mechanisms that could help schools meet standards. This program is potentially such a mechanism.

Evaluation Approach: Additional Assumptions

Every evaluation is grounded in two general sets of conditions:

- The culture, aspirations, activities, program results, and data of the program itself.
- A set of assumptions specific to the evaluator or evaluators. No human is able to approach a situation without such overarching beliefs, which condition the processes of both data collection and data analysis. This evaluation is not without such assumptions, which have guided this work and are here acknowledged:
 - Any program meant to meet standards, such as the EALRs, must focus on the teaching and learning, not only of specific content, but also substantive inquiry skills that can prepare students to master the content.
 - The arts may be valuable, even essential components of standards-based education. The research base on this connection is not yet solidly in place. However, the existing research suggests that, when used effectively within educational programs, they should significantly enhance the teaching and learning of important, standards-based content.
 - The arts can do this optimally when all other forces are aligned. For example, curricula and lesson plans are developed to meet standards, assessments are built into learning, adequate use is made of community arts resources, and so on.
 - An effective evaluation of any education program uses the most direct data—evidence of learning—as the source for its findings.
 - These data need to demonstrate the actual outcomes of the program.
 - Such outcomes should reflect directly back to the program's goals.

Thus, this evaluation first turned to the official goals of the program as a basis for all subsequent work.

Program Goals

The goals of the Community Consortium Grants program are to:

1. Encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public school/s and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education (i.e. public detention centers, hospitals).
2. Encourage full utilization of local resources by supporting partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members.
3. Help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students.
4. Develop local arts education expertise, when applicable, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects.

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5. Support programming that will be sustained through time, will grow, improve, attract other funding sources, and in applicable cases expand. The grant is not designed to support one-time projects.²

From Goals to Outcomes

Sometimes it may be necessary to slightly alter the language of a goal in order to improve its measurability. In the next sections of this report, which present the key findings revealed by the evaluation, these findings are presented as the major program outcomes. Such statements differ from goals in that they are more specific as to populations impacted, as well as degree or extent (for example, 35 percent of the grantees implemented standards-based curricula).

Major Findings of the Evaluation

The evaluation finds that the Community Consortium Grants Program is bringing about major change in the communities it serves. These changes are the program outcomes referenced in the introduction, and are strongly correlated with the program's goals, thus allowing organization of the findings in relation to the five goals. While not uniform, these outcomes are noted in a majority of the sites to one degree or another. In those few sites where their presence has not been detected, it is most likely due to the absence of complete data, rather than necessarily a failure to bring about some kind of outcomes.

These outcomes are fully discussed in the following sections.

² These goals are taken from the general category description in both the WSAC printed grants guidelines and the agency's Website. Although not numbered in the original sources, they are numbered here in order to reference them throughout the report.

Deepening Standards-Based Education

It was truly exciting to see the teachers integrate the arts curriculum into other areas of study and to witness the wonderful ways they took the arts and literacy lesson plans as springboards for deepening and enriching their curriculum. Over time the language of art and the language of writing began to become the language of other areas and disciplines. In this sense the curricula in the classrooms in which I followed ...began to look like a collage in which the edges of art, writing, reading, math, imagination and creativity were not distinct and clear-cut one from the other, but rather integrated into more of a whole.

—2002 Final Report, Tacoma Public Schools

Finding 1: The grants are helping communities build their capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts.

Overwhelmingly, the grantees and their consortium partners are more effectively implementing the Essential Academic Learning Requirements, and the program is pivotal in this increased effectiveness. The evidence for this conclusion is strong: Analyses of lesson plans and curricula, teacher guides, and other documents demonstrate numerous connections between their content and the EALRs. Moreover, the implementation of these curricula, as described and documented in final report narratives, photography, and media, clearly transform the standards into actual teaching (and often learning) in Washington's classrooms.

Corresponds to Goal 1: Encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public school/s and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education (i.e. public detention centers, hospitals).

Indicators that Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lesson plans, teacher guides, and other learning materials incorporate the EALRs in their design.▪ Meaningful connections link curricula, units, and lessons to EALRs.▪ Grants address a variety of appropriate partner sites in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 80% of a sample of lesson plans, teacher guides, and other learning materials incorporate the EALRs in their design.▪ 80% of such materials make meaningful connections with EALRs.▪ 100% of grant applications and final reports address a variety of appropriate partner sites in the community.

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In any effective standards-based education program, there is a clear “chain of logic” that is necessary. This chain consists of six links:

1. Identify the standards that are most central to the program.

There is no way that any program can teach everything. It is essential to identify the most central learnings. This is precisely what one grantee did:

Once initial teacher applications for residencies were received, it came to the Steering Committee’s attention that the teachers were missing key points in our application form that identified criteria for their work. Staff members in the school district were interested in working with artists in their classrooms, but they had not clearly identified what it was they wanted children to know and be able to do. In addition, there was a limited explanation as to what curricular areas were being enhanced and how the arts were to be used to increase student learning. And in several areas the art content was not identified.



An essential part of this process is to map the Essential Learnings to the lessons being planned:

Fifty-four artists and teachers attended Susy Watts’ three workshops on the Essential Learnings in the Arts. This resulted in 60% of the artists who taught in the schools having prepared lesson plans with EALRs. Twenty percent of the county’s school administrators attended a Susy Watts workshop. [According to a 2nd grade teacher] “We have had Clare Clark in our classroom to teach watercolor with several techniques. I was impressed that she had made lesson plans with clear art objectives from the EALRS.”

The problem that the Consortia face in narrowing and focusing is not unique to partnerships. Teachers throughout American face bewildering complexities of standards, particularly at the elementary level. One of the most useful methods for honing instruction to meet the most important goals is to target key ideas, concepts, or understandings, using a model such as the *Understanding by Design* approach of Wiggins and McTighe.

Examples of this process can be found in several of the Consortia programs. For example, the final report of Arts Impact demonstrates a consistent use of this type of program and curricula design, as the following typical lesson demonstrates:

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Essential Questions: What is the difference between representational art and abstract or nonobjective art? How are lighter and darker values of the same color made?

Enduring Understandings: Viewing art for formal qualities can include only references to shapes, line, and color, and no realistic objects. Mixing white into a color creates lighter values of the same color; mixing complementary colors or black into a color create darker values of the same color.

2. Adapt and publish the standards.

An even more preliminary step may be to acquaint various partners with the Essential Learnings. One respondent noted: “The survey results helped us realize that many teachers didn’t have more than a peripheral understanding of the EALRs. Consortium consultant, [name omitted], helped us gain new awareness of applications of the EALRs for the standards in the arts and for applying the arts to other subject areas.” As this statement indicates, it may become necessary to provide teacher professional development as a key component of the process of using standards.

3. “Unpack” the standards to reveal and clarify the understandings, knowledge, and skills that are implicit in them.

It is the essence of standards-based instruction to target the essential understandings, knowledge, and skills that students should master. Often these outcomes may not be explicit in the standards themselves. It is imperative that educators make the standards operational at the level of student learning. The following example shows how this works:

Higher-Order Thinking: A Consortium Example

Overall Goal

The Rainier Beach Arts Consortium project...seeks to help students to become informed, critically thinking citizens in a democracy and in a global setting. The program has the following outcomes:

Outcome 1. To expand and develop each student's critical thinking and public speaking skills. The program develops critical thinking skills by investigating moral and ethical dilemmas found in dramatic literature. Students are asked to take and defend a position on an issue raised in a play. Dialogue, discussion, evaluation, reconsideration are hallmarks of Living History activity. Sharing work and learning how to critique positively are also hallmarks of the writing workshops. For most of the participants, this is their first opportunity to share creative work with peers.

Outcome 2. To bring relevancy to contemporary and classical literature, drama, and history for all students. Living History explores themes that playwrights have been grappling with since the dawn of literature, and demonstrates that theatre is a living, breathing and viable art form for their own creative impulses.

Outcome 3. To develop the creativity within each young person. The consortium works from the core belief that everyone is born with creative ability. Because the vast majority of the participants in the program have received no dramatic training, the program emphasizes the use of the fundamental tools they already have—their ability to speak, to think, to express, and to move. In addition, by emphasizing participants’ fundamental ability to express

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This form of instruction results in powerful results:

A Student Writing Sample (excerpt)

His occupation is being a kid.
He does a great job.
He is in the fourth grade.
He doesn't really have a religion. He believes in God and Jesus Christ but he's not a strict Christian.
He lives in a dirty neighborhood full of uglv

The authenticity of student work, and its importance as evidence of effective instruction, is further discussed under link #5, below.

4. Define the embedded questions that will guide student inquiry.

Inside every powerful lesson that focuses on essential or enduring knowledge are key questions that help students to think at high levels. The following example demonstrates how these questions are elicited in

a lesson:

An actor undergoes a metamorphosis that challenges the students to consider their expectations. She begins a monologue with clothing and speech that plays with typical stereotypes of African Americans. However, as her performance increases in complexity and texture, and as the character interacts with the class, she becomes a life and blood character with a compelling story to tell. This encourages the students to consider the actor's command of performance, the wonder of live theatre, and the serious issues raised by the actor's racial identity, the pressures of adulthood, and cultural assumptions.



5. Identify a range of assessment tools, including the authentic tasks that demonstrate mastery of the standards.

It is imperative to design assessments that tap genuine understanding. Such understanding, as described in one of the consortia reports, encompasses a deep level of cognition:

Students learn the heartbeat behind Shakespeare's beautiful language, iambic pentameter, by reading and performing scenes from Cymbeline. Acting the parts out helps the participants to learn why Shakespeare is considered a peerless artist, both for his technical and artistic command. By introducing young people to the technical side of art, Living History deepens the participant's appreciation for the training and effort that is needed to create exciting theatre.

A key characteristic of the assessment is that it centers around work of the students themselves:

The pieces that the young people write are collected into a book that is professionally designed and printed. Students are given disposable cameras

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and a shot list and their pictures are used to illustrate the book. This compendium provides to youth a tangible sense of accomplishment. In addition, through careful and selective distribution, the book will be an effective promotional tool.

6. Plan the learning activities that will bring about the mastery.

All of these steps are essential in the process. In the best of the programs funded through the Community Consortium, the chain of logic is followed throughout. Perhaps the preeminent example in the program is Arts Impact, one of the larger collaborations.³ Their final report notes how this process has worked for them:

Each teacher was required to plan and write at least one arts lesson with his or her mentor. These arts lessons were designed on a common Arts Impact lesson format and aligned with the Washington State Arts Essential Learnings. Teachers wrote lessons that included artistic problems to solve (essential questions), big ideas (enduring understandings), teaching strategies, assessment strategies, arts vocabulary, and use of community resources.

Additionally, teachers constructed lessons to send home to the families to communicate understanding of the lesson focus and acquired concepts and skills. Teachers were asked to project the ways students would use the arts in daily living through lifelong applications. Teachers assessed student art based on criteria using compiled checklists, rubrics, student reflections through writing, and/or videotape evidence of student performances.

The results, as the final Arts Impact report noted, were impressive:

- 98% of the teachers (56 of 57) wrote art lesson plans.
- 93% of the teachers (53 of 57) edited their lesson plans to reflect what they learned while they taught.
- 93% (53 of 57) compiled student assessments: checklists, rubrics, self-reflections as evidence of student learning.
- 88% of the teachers (50 of 57) documented the student learning by collecting and forwarding copies of student art or performances.

The results of these processes are often powerful learning, as another grantee reports:

This year's debates around individual integrity vs. the needs of a greater community, discipline vs. obsession and the price of activism were all issues the students at Rainier Beach seemed familiar with



³ The Arts Impact final report is probably the most comprehensive final report submitted in 2002 and serves as a model for final reporting. It sets the standard in a number of areas, including lesson planning and use of assessment for evaluative data.

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and when asked to dig deeper in the debates and really defend their positions they embraced the challenge. When we took the writing students to the next level, asking them to flesh out these ideas in their own creative voice, they were able to transform the circumstances they had addressed in class into narratives from their own imaginations. They created characters and stories while still wrestling with similar life struggles they began in the classroom.

Powerful learning comes in many forms. In the arts, it is often about viewpoint, perspective, finding one's moral compass in times of ambiguity. At one of the consortium sites, students read a story in which soldiers had to make a difficult choice, to obey an order or to obey their personal moral precepts. One student commented:

I couldn't believe how many people chose the guy's side in the debate. Most of them didn't even say why. War is not about killing; it's about coming to an agreement through violence. I personally don't like war because of the killing. But when someone surrenders it is not okay to kill them. Even if it might be a trick. There is no way to know if it's a trick, though.

Alignment: A Key to Standards-Based Instruction

Aligning all of these stages and processes—standards, curriculum, student outcomes, assessments, and activities—is the primary key to successful standards-based instruction. Only if these components are aligned is the program likely to succeed as planned.

Variations in Success

Not all Consortium sites have been equally successful in realizing this outcome of supporting standards-based education—or, rather, in some cases the evidence is not as comprehensive nor as clear in this regard. Some Consortia seem to have omitted a few of the important links in the chain described in the previous section. In a few of the programs, there appears to be a fallback to the more traditional approach of “experiential” or “exposure” arts education, rather than the more rigorous, standards-based model espoused in this evaluation report. Where these gaps in alignment and rigor exist, there is the potential to improve practice through mutual learning and peer coaching among the varied projects throughout the state.

Profiles of Successful Sites

There are many examples of success in meeting standards-based instruction. For example, Arts Impact provides a useful model, as evidenced by its final report. As the summary of the AIE program notes:

Arts Impact “came into its own” in its third year. The consortium strengthened its ties with principals, gained significant national credibility through their assessment strategies, made connections with the private sector, and expanded the program with a million dollar grant from the US Department of Education.

The program seems to excel in many of the critical links mentioned in this report, including professional development, curriculum, and assessment. The project even has a significant technology component, with sample lesson plans posted to its website:

http://www.culturalcncl.com/images/shared_images/sample_lesson_plans.pdf

Intiman Theatre provides another example of success. Its use of Living History is but one strand in its multifaceted approach to learning through the arts:

A week-long Living History residency at Rainier Beach High School...will be conducted with 16 language arts, social studies, drama and life skills classes. On the first day of the residency, actors perform scenes taken from Intiman's mainstage productions to a series of student assemblies. This ensures that every student that participates in a classroom workshop has seen one performance, giving them a common experience from which to draw. In addition, witnessing the actors in both a performance and a class provides an insight into the theatrical process. The next four days are spent in classrooms where the actors use improvisation to teach students about theatre and both contemporary and historical issues and ideas. The success of Living History is directly related to the fact that the actors work with the students on their

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own turf, the classroom. The encounters provide a kinetic atmosphere conducive for learning and active student participation, and the actors employ proven techniques that engage even the most reluctant students to participate. Living History has been serving students since 1986.

Another exemplar is Jack Straw Productions, with a comprehensive program that unites oral history with the needs of visually impaired students. The program is summarized by the following from its final 2002 application:

We will work with teachers in both Eastern and Western WA to develop age-appropriate methodology for teaching concepts in ethnomusicology, specifically Native American and Hispanic cultural studies, as well as principles of oral history and docudrama. We would like to bring our participating teachers to Seattle for training, in addition to on-site preparation in various locations around the state. In addition to our own team of artists/trainers, we will be working with graduate students from Patricia Campbell's music/ethnomusicology education program at the University of Washington who are currently working at our new partner schools in White Swan.

Theater: Radio Theater (oral history): In these projects, artists, audio engineers, and certified teachers work with students to interview, record, and transcribe oral histories of family and community members. Students then write radio drama scripts, create and research sound effects, and locate or create period music. Sound artists work with students to produce and perform radio theater pieces using all of these elements. Projects are integrated into the classroom curriculum and can focus on a variety of topics such as family of origin, ethnic heritage/cultural celebrations, neighborhood and community history, world history, or the environment. English as a Second Language students interview family or community members in their first language and in English. (Schools: Environmental & Adventure School, Kirkland, Olympic View Elementary/Seattle, Kimball/Seattle, Pathfinder/Seattle, Harrah/Yakima, White Swan HS/White Swan).

Youth with visual impairments are severely limited in their opportunities to acquire skills and experiences, which can enrich their lives through self-determination and self-expression. This project exposes blind and visually impaired students to creative opportunities in the medium of sound. Students in this program have an opportunity to learn about audio production by creating an audio program of their own design. Special attention is given to different kinds of microphones for use with different kinds of sounds, as well as recording in a variety of settings. Students work with artists and engineers to write, perform, record, and produce their own piece of audio art. The final result of the project is a 30-minute radio program, which is broadcast around Washington State via the Evergreen Radio Reading Service. (Arts & Visually

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Impaired Audiences, Department of Services for the Blind, Washington State School for the Blind, additional locations around the state TBD)

While oral history is occasionally incorporated into classroom curricula, it is rarely used as the foundation for art. This program helps students to explore their family, community, and national heritage, gain an appreciation for the diverse cultural backgrounds of the members of their school and community, and expand their ability to express themselves artistically through the medium of sound. Youth with visual impairments are severely limited in their opportunities to acquire skills and experiences that can enrich their lives through self-determination and self-expression. This project exposes blind and visually impaired students to creative opportunities in the medium of sound, which is naturally accessible to them. One of our goals with this project is to develop accessibility techniques for audio production studios so that blind people interested in learning to be producers will have more opportunities. To our knowledge, no such program has ever been attempted anywhere before.

There are numerous other examples: Bainbridge Island has an extensive, comprehensive curriculum planning process; the International Arts Consortium provides a national model for intercultural education; and so on. The purpose of this section is not to highlight specific programs but to demonstrate the incredible variety of ways in which arts education partnerships can move toward implementation of standards.

Some Remaining Challenges

These successes point the way for other Consortia to follow. In some of the grants, the linkages between curricula, assessment, and learning activities are not as tightly connected. A major recommendation of this report is that the mentoring processes, so evident within some consortia, be made to cross community boundaries and develop a statewide scope. In this way, the advanced programs can help others to learn. This is clearly a project for another year.

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Building Local Partnerships

Finding 2: The program is developing partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members. These partnerships are increasing their capacity to more fully use their communities' resources.

Many of the grants support relatively complex partnerships between multiple organizations and schools. For example, The Bainbridge Island project (BIAECC) includes Bainbridge Chorale, Rainier Chamber Winds, Bainbridge Performing Arts, Drama in Education, Bainbridge Dance Center, Bainbridge Arts and Crafts, Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council, and Bainbridge Island Broadcasting.

Corresponds to Goal 2: Encourage full utilization of local resources by supporting partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members.

Indicators that Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Grant applications and final reports describe extensive use of local resources.▪ Grant applications and final reports describe partnership characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 100% of applications and final reports describe extensive use of local resources.▪ 100% of applications and final reports describe partnerships that make appropriate use of community resources.

The goal of forming local partnerships utilizing local resources makes total sense. There is a natural tendency for schools and community cultural organizations to become nuclei for the development of relationships. Evidence of the successful realization of this goal is abundant, as in the following examples:

The consortium is really catching on in the community! In January, another 10 parents and business folks joined the Consortium planning group, raising the planning group to 10% of the Curlew Community. The diverse group consists of teenagers and grandparents. Families were so impressed with Rod Molzahn's residency that the group raised funds to bring him back again to work with our students and community theatre group.

In addition, this report noted that "the schools have devoted staff time and resources to each drama project for planning, support, and project oversight" and that "the Consortium Committee became instrumental in the movement to create an arts center in Curlew."

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In some cases, partnerships have included Native American communities:

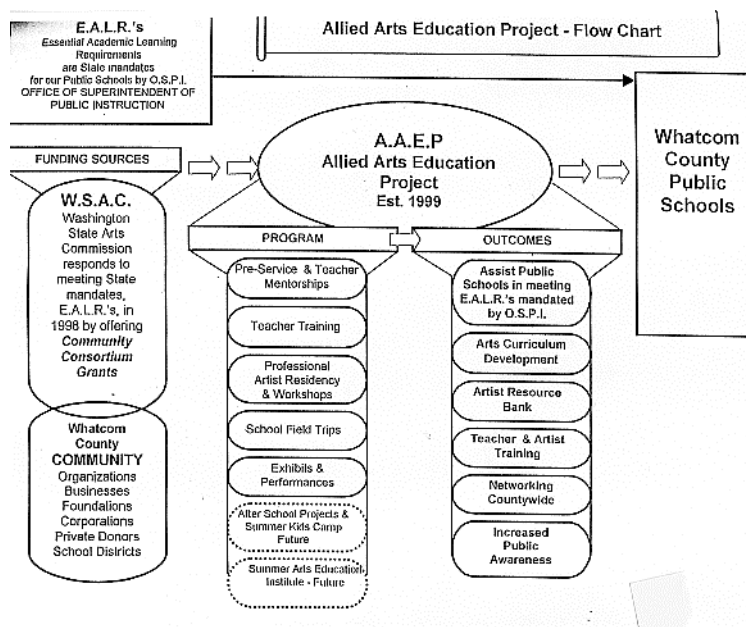
Jennifer Scott, Deputy Director of the Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute, presented facts vs. myth About Native Americans and why it is important for Native and non-Native people to understand one another. Alex McCarty exposed students of the elements of Northwest Coast Indian form line design. Students created images of Northwest animals on cedar. Cheri Potts, a curriculum developer for the Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute, spoke to the students about landscape and sacred places. She also led the students in an exercise, where students create a web of understanding of similarities among them. Cheri met with the teachers from both schools and presented a multi-cultural curriculum and had open discussion on how to best integrate into their classrooms.

The resources of a community may mean human resources, or they may include significant natural resources:

Students engaged in a great range of different types of field studies from spending an entire day on the Sound at Frye Cove to examining the habitat of a Northwest pond.

Variations in Success

Some sites have been more successful than others. What are the factors that have helped some programs to succeed? Time and again, the reports are clear in indicating the following: effective use of needs assessment, joint planning, and communication. The “logic model” or flowchart below depicts effective planning in action:



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As many of these concepts—needs assessment, planning, and partnerships—are essential to the relationships with communities, they are more fully developed in the next section.

Meeting Community Needs

Republic and Curlew students rarely experience professional drama. The nearest theater is a three-hour drive over snow covered passes. The 280-mile round trip prevents families from attending professional productions in Spokane. Ferry County residents within a twenty-mile radius around Curlew face extreme isolation, and instability since another mine, a major employer, has closed. Students and community members need an opportunity to release stress of an unstable economy and rising unemployment within the communities. Outside of competitive sports, there are few activities for teens to do in Republic or Curlew. The majority of students that turned out for Spoon River Anthology...were the teens that do not turn out for other events.

—2002 Final Report, Curlew School District

Finding 3: The grantees' communities are developing strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students.

Corresponds to Goal 3: Help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students.

Indicators that Would Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Applications and final reports describe emergent programming, connecting it to needs.Needs are identified through credible processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">100% of grantees described how their programs meet community needs.100% of grantees identified detailed acceptable needs assessment processes.⁴

Most of the grant applications and final reports are very clear in their goals, including how they will meet the needs of specific populations. This characteristic is a major strength of the program and has been built into the guidelines from the beginning. In addition to doing this, and generally doing it well, many of the consortia exhibit specific aspects of needs assessment.

⁴ As rated on a rubric developed for this purpose

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For example, in order to meet needs, a grantee has to learn what those needs are, and—at an even more basic level—who has the needs that can be met. Often these persons may include teachers, artists, administrators, parents, and community members. As reported in the following, a general awareness of local conditions can lead to very specific identification of needs for one population:

Pierce County children do not receive a systematic education in the arts. At the elementary level, where our program is focused, music specialists offer 1/2 to 1 hour of music each week in most districts, but there are almost no other arts specialists. Local cultural organizations offer excellent enrichment programs, but even with pre- and post- activities these performances and exhibitions are isolated special events, not integrated with ongoing curriculum.

This awareness led to more detailed data-collection techniques:

In 1997, the Cultural Council of Greater Tacoma conducted a survey of Pierce County teachers. More than two thirds of the responding teachers rated the arts as essential or very important, and 65% said there was not enough emphasis on arts education in their districts. While 71% of the respondents knew about the upcoming Essential Academic Learnings Requirements in the arts (EALRs), only 21% said they had the skills to teach the arts in their classroom.

Responding to these needs, the grantee implemented a plan of action:

In response to these findings, in March of 1998, the Cultural Council convened a task force to determine the feasibility of creating an institute where teachers could team arts skills and ways to integrate the arts into other curriculum areas. Reviewing models nationally and regionally we observed a shift from enrichment, exposure approach to strategic planning of arts curriculum integrated with other subject areas. Our research indicated that the most successful programs featured teacher training as part of ongoing partnerships between cultural institutions and schools. A best practices list from these models was compiled and integrated into the Pierce County Arts Education Partnership when it was inaugurated in the summer of 1999. The commitment of cultural organizations, schools, teachers and artists to change and adopt new ways of working has been key to the success of the program.

Assessing needs is not a single-shot affair. You need to have a plan. The plan must be integrated into the overall program planning and include identifying, collecting, and using data. One of the grantees describes a process that encompasses all of the necessary steps:

Michael Sikes, Ph.D.



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Each school formed a planning team of teachers and parents. Then, they analyzed test score data and survey information from students, staff and parents to determine improvement priorities. Those priorities include learning opportunities that better address the wide range of student ability and strengthening student relationships with peers and adults. Next, a research team began to study other similar schools and programs achieving better results for students. Then, they began the process of developing short and long-term action plans to begin next fall.

In addition to identifying needs as the outset of a program, it is important to repeat this process on an ongoing basis. Needs change over time. A number of grantees have detailed quite extensive use of evaluation processes to uncover needs. An example of this effect is related in the following excerpt from a final report:

Based on the results of a teacher questionnaire administered in 2000-2001, the experience of working for two years with teachers and students at Sakai Intermediate School, and an investigation of how other successful programs promoted arts education, BIAECC expanded the arts education project in 2001-2002. Twenty-seven teachers and almost fifteen hundred students at all three K-4 schools, the 1-6 alternative school, as well as 5th and 6th graders at Sakai participated. Teachers who attended the August 2001 training institute were able to choose from a menu of classroom arts activities offered by the Consortium throughout the school year.

It definitely helps to have an inclusive process, with the full participation of everyone who has a stake in the program, as described in the following:

Because of the program's relatively small size and the participants' trust and willingness to be flexible we were able to make and execute decisions quickly and easily. We anticipate and make changes as we go. The artists regularly attend the school's staff meetings. One World Theatre chooses the teaching artists from our ensemble and associate artists. Teachers decide which subjects the residencies will cover. Everything else is decided with input from artists, teachers, staff, parents and students.

In addition to the inclusive nature of this program, there appears to be a strong relationship between the small scale of this project and its adaptability. Being able to meet face-to-face and work collaboratively imbues a sense of trust, which is connected to a growing sense of flexibility.

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Building Local Intellectual Capital

An important part of this year's work is the Artist Training Workshop. Artists will spend time deconstructing the learning process and reflect both on what we learn and how we learn. They will also learn how their lessons can support the Essential Learnings.

—2002 Final Report, City of Enumclaw Arts Commission

Corresponds to Goal 4: Develop local arts education expertise, when applicable, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects.

Finding 4: The program is developing local expertise in arts education, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects. The evidence of this effect is widespread throughout the program.

Indicators that Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
▪ Applications and final reports describe results of mentoring processes.	▪ 85% of grantees described results of their mentoring processes.

Mentoring is an important component of many of the projects, as one final report noted:

[Major accomplishments in 2001-2002 include] Increased teacher mentoring through elective classes (teachers have reported that this “apprenticeship” is an effective approach to receive arts training; unlike an in-service, students are present, allowing them to directly teach the skills they are learning.

One of the consortium reports demonstrates the growth in teacher competence, as self-assessed, as a consequence of its summer institute:

Describe the current level of competency you feel for teaching the visual arts.	# of teacher responses pre summer institute	# of teacher responses post summer institute
Highly/very competent in teaching the visual arts	4 (7%)	6 (11%)
Competent/above average/confident in teaching the arts	6 (10%)	4 (26%)
Moderately average/adequate/fairly competent in teaching the visual arts	15 (27%)	21 (38%)
Growing/beginning confidence in teaching the visual arts	5 (9%)	11 (20%)
Limited/low confidence in teaching the visual arts	22 (39%)	3 (5%)

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No knowledge; not an art teacher Don't know; no answer	4 (7%)
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Often, partners in collaborative arts education programs may lack specific knowledge or skills that others possess. There is considerable opportunity in the Consortia to build expertise through cooperative learning, as demonstrated at one site:

...many of the rostered artists have a background in their own artistic field, but often have a limited ability to deconstruct their own process and then put it together in a step-by-step learning process for others. As well, teachers have a broad range of expertise within the educational arena, but they often do not have a strong background in the ways the Essential Learnings can be used to improve instruction in the arts and other curricular areas. Most of this year's residencies featured teacher training beyond the classroom setting. For example, several teachers wrote into their budget a request for a substitute teacher upon conclusion of the residency to allow for one-on-one instruction with the artist. It will be required of all residencies in the future. The Steering Committee will also continue to conduct teacher training as an outreach program as well as establishing workshops for teachers and artists focusing on what and how children learn.

How does the mentoring process work? An analysis of the 2002 Consortium programs (as well as background knowledge of other national model programs) indicates that several mechanisms contribute to this process:

1. Planned Professional Development

A large number of the Consortium sites used formal training programs as a tool to meet their objectives, which include helping to achieve the Essential Learning Requirements. The best of these programs are not single-shot workshops, but systemic efforts to build teacher and school capacity over the long term. The Pierce County program exemplifies this:

The Pierce County Arts Education Partnership (PCAEP) is designed to develop teachers' capacity to create and deliver integrated arts lessons to their students. The program's goal is to strengthen the participating teachers' ability to teach visual and performing arts concepts and skills and to integrate the use of arts and cultural resources into education practice across the curriculum.

The program includes a one-week summer institute, follow-up workshops and artist/teacher mentorships. Schools send one-third of their teachers to encourage collegial support. The same teachers participate for two years to develop strong competence and confidence in arts teaching. New this year will be an on-site workshop for all the teachers in each participating school.

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We are also discussing the possibility of offering a family workshop either on-site or at a cultural institution.

2. Cognitive Apprenticeship

Persons in the arts are familiar with the master-apprentice relationship, in which knowledge and skills in an art discipline are handed down over time. This provides a useful metaphor for the learning that takes place among partners working together on a project. Many examples of this process are cited by grantees, as in the following examples:

Teachers and artists work collaboratively in an active, hands-on environment. This “apprenticeship” approach allows the teachers to receive training every minute that the artists are working with the students, and also makes our artists more competent teachers.

[Major accomplishments in 2001-2002 include] Increased teacher mentoring through elective classes. Teachers have reported that this “apprenticeship” is an effective approach to receive arts training; unlike an in-service, students are present, allowing them to directly teach the skills they are learning.

3. Reflective Practice

In the most successful consortia, time is built in so that teachers, artists, and administrators can examine data and use it to make decisions about curricula decisions, teaching methods, and approaches. This “reflective practice” is a form of collegial, self-directed learning and is at the heart of education reform.

The next section, Using Evaluation to Learn, has more to say on the matter of examining data and using it for continuous improvement.

4. Codifying Knowledge

Often, the intellectual capital in the various projects is communicated and preserved. This is done through significant resources such as the student and teacher guides. Examples of these resources include *Arts Impact: Training teachers to use the arts in the classroom* (first year final report, Cultural Council of Greater Tacoma). This document is an important source of curricula, lesson plans, assessments, and other resources that can be recycled into programming and thus not lost. Other projects have yielded similar examples.

My Life is a Puzzle With
One Piece Missing



Richard Hugo House
School Alliance Anthology
Spring 2002

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The best of these guides provide ongoing support to project participants, and invaluable documentation of the development of curricula, assessments, and lessons.

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Using Evaluation to Learn

Each school formed a planning team of teachers and parents. Then, they analyzed test score data and survey information from students, staff and parents to determine improvement priorities. Those priorities include learning opportunities that better address the wide range of student ability and strengthening student relationships with peers and adults. Next, a research team began to study other similar schools and programs achieving better results for students. Then, they began the process of developing short and long-term action plans to begin next fall.

—2002 Final Report, Mercer Island School District

Finding 5: The program is bringing about significant improvement in the use of data from evaluation and assessment to enhance programming and instruction.

Corresponds to part of Goal 5
(excerpted): Support programming that will...improve.

Indicators that Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
▪ Applications and final reports describe use of data to improve programs.	▪ 95% of grantees clearly described how they used data to improve their programs.

Evaluation, and its effective use, are at the heart of the Community Consortium Program. This is why the Evaluation Tool Kit was developed at the program's inception. This effective use of evaluation to learn what works, to improve programs, and to communicate success consists, in fact, of several essential components:

Conducting Quality Assessment

Assessment of student data has already been discussed in relation to standards-based instruction. However, it is also imperative to understand that assessment provides the primary source of data for evaluating the outcomes of educational programs.

There are many good examples of state-of-the-art assessment in the Consortium Program. The use of authentic assessment tasks has been referenced previously. Another key element is the development of learning objectives that are prominently posted in classrooms and shared with students (Arts Impact is an excellent example), so that learners know what they are responsible for. Such practices are at the leading edge of assessment reform, within and outside the arts.

Students are not the only learners to be assessed. Various grantees have taken the opportunity to assess adult learners—the teachers and artists being trained through professional development programs—as a previous example (see table, p. 31) indicates.

Other Evaluative Data

Notwithstanding assessment's importance, there are other vital sources of data that can inform the implementation of programs. These include parent and audience surveys; observations, either open ended or guided by checklists; focus groups; and interviews. There is considerable evidence that a range of these tools are being utilized in the program.

The Uses of Evaluation: Program Improvement and Decision Making

Yet evaluation is useless if unused. It is imperative that the data from program evaluation be cycled back into program improvement. This evaluation has found preliminary evidence that the evaluations conducted by the various consortia are leading to program improvement through informed decision making. This is an area that needs to be more fully articulated in future grant applications and final reports.

Communicating Results

There is another important use of evaluation: Positive findings can help improve awareness and support of programs. Many final reports have attached press clippings and other evidence that results are being disseminated to those who might be able to use them to help make or leverage policy decisions at school boards, city commission meetings, or the state legislature.

Future Challenges in Evaluation

The *Evaluation Tool Kit* was never meant to be an all-purpose source of evaluation knowledge and tools. Wisely, most Consortia have found what was useful there and added other components as needed.

It may be time for the Consortium to ratchet up the evaluation to a new level. This might involve more deliberate and sophisticated use of such tools as documentation of student work, the development of shared tools—such as rubrics—that work across sites, and the compilation of data on student achievement and success in the program.

Building Sustainability

The project is becoming known and artist requests are increasing in all schools. Teachers new to the project accounted for 52% of the bookings. So many artists were used that funds for artists were depleted two months before school was out.

—2002 Final Report, CREATE

Finding 6: The program is helping build community awareness, support, and advocacy mechanisms that support the Essential Learning Requirements.

Corresponds to the remaining portion of Goal 5 (excerpted): Support programming that will be sustained through time, will grow...attract other funding sources, and in applicable cases expand. The grant is not designed to support one-time projects.

Indicators that Support this Finding	Results of Statistical Analyses
▪ Applications and final reports describe the growth of community support and additional funding.	▪ 100% of grantees provided descriptions of the growth of community support and funding.

It is an essential goal of the Consortium Program that funded partnerships help to build independent, sustainable capacity in their communities. There is ample evidence that this is happening all over Washington. One Consortium relates the unfolding of this process:

Mari Mullen, Director of the Main Street Program for Port Townsend, helped to coordinate over 30 downtown and uptown businesses, the Port Townsend Library and the Jefferson County Historical Society in a month long exhibit of student work from all of the art programs K-12. Additionally three parent volunteers stepped forward to plan the entire project, collecting and distributing all of the artwork to the numerous locations, assisting in installation and take down. Businesses created highly visible and imaginative displays of student work, which was viewed by thousands of community members and visitors to Port Townsend throughout the month. By plastering the town with 450 pieces of student work, accompanied by detailed descriptions of the processes involved and the various programs that generated the work, we were able to educate our community and move the kids' work out of the school hallway "ghetto," where it is often just part of the background.

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The exhibit opened for the first Saturday's gallery walk. An additional feature that night was Richard Clairmont's drama students performing mime in an empty storefront for a large, appreciative sidewalk audience.

These activities were connected to other ongoing efforts, creating a synergistic community-wide effort:

US Bank hosts an exhibit of a featured student artist each month. Each student who exhibits at the bank is also awarded a \$50 savings bond by the bank. A high school technology student worked on developing a web site for the Consortium, launched in June 2002. The consortium is looking forward to increased visibility and opportunity for community education provided by this project. The Port Townsend Leader, a weekly newspaper, consistently reports on Consortium-related events and projects...

These various activities appear to be helpful in changing school practice and policy, as well as informal school culture, in some cases:

We have made extensive headway in developing a stronger arts culture in the Enumclaw schools. Residencies have had a broad impact on those who work and learn in the schools and the community at large. The ongoing conversations in faculty rooms, student stories at home, newspaper articles and frequent culminating events have had a definite impact on our community. One school has committed teachers and a principal attending a one-week CCLASSI (Creating Connections: The Arts and Successful Schools Institute) session this summer.

At other sites, the program is helping to build educational capacity while sustaining indigenous traditions:

It was a challenge to elicit the will of the Kalispel Tribe. A conversation with Tribal leaders and the Kalispel site coordinator indicated that classes on the reservation and at the Tribe's Camas Institute would be helpful. Next year and every year the project will continue to seek the Kalispel educational agenda and be responsive to it. The Tribe is a solid partner although the shape of that partnership is fluid. The project has documentation on some of the tribal artists. This is seen by the Kalispels as a way to keep their stories and traditions alive.

Not all sites are universally successful, although challenges often lead to important lessons for the future: "It was a challenge to include parents in the project. Next year, notes [sent] home after in-school art lessons will help to raise parental awareness."

Reflecting National Trends

Finding 7: The data that emerge from this evaluation demonstrate that the program is reflecting important national trends and findings in arts education, in education reform in general, and specifically in curriculum, assessment, and standards-based instruction.

Indicators that Support this Finding	Data Source
▪ Project findings reflect national trends and best practices.	▪ Synthesis of data with findings from other national research.

Thus far, this report has presented its findings solely within the context of the program goals and the state of Washington. What follows is a synthesis of these findings with other national research. This synthesis supports the following key understandings:

- **Sound curricula and effective, thoughtful lesson planning play essential roles in fostering learning and helping students to meet standards.**

Significant national research, including the extensive research behind the *Understanding by Design* model (Wiggins and McTighe) and *Dimensions of Learning* (Marzano) support the conclusion that the best way to meet standards **and** to prepare students to succeed academically is through effective lessons. Such lessons should be aligned with standards, include significant learning goals that reflect essential knowledge, use a variety of assessment tools that measure mastery of the learning goals, and elicit active student participation through engaging learning activities.

In the best of the Community Consortium projects, these conclusions are repeatedly born out. These local, real-world examples provide incremental evidence that lesson design is a direct route to standards-based instruction.

- **Student engagement is connected with student learning and student mastery of standards.**
- **The arts and content-rich, engaging instruction centered on real-world situations and problems (as opposed to abstract, disconnected academic exercises) can help ensure student engagement.**

Years of cumulative research support the connection between student engagement and student learning. Where children are actively involved in their own learning, where they approach learning tasks with interest and excitement, they learn more and learn better. They spend more time on task and take ownership of their own learning goals.

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Moreover, a growing body of research supports the link between participation in the arts and student engagement (and consequently student learning). See, for example, various research reports emanating from the Arts Education Partnership, such as *Critical Links* and *Champions of Change*.

In many of the consortia, evaluations reveal a strong positive effect on student engagement through the arts, and through rich, integrated curricula. These findings provide an important link to the national research base.

- **Thoughtful, provocative assessments centered on authentic problems are related to student engagement and meaningful time on task.**

This is yet another area in which findings from the Community Consortium Program coincide with an expansive body of national research, both within the arts and in the more generalized areas of education. Much of this research underlies the model known as *Understanding by Design*; however, extensive research at Harvard Project Zero and Arts Propel have also underscored the value of “authentic” modes of assessment.

- **The effective use of evaluation is correlated with the capacity to grow and sustain programs.**

It is significant that the Consortium has embedded evaluation as a part of the grants process and has placed a strong emphasis on building local capacity to evaluate programs. In the most successful arts education programs nationally, effective use of evaluation is central to program success and expansion. Evaluation use—defined as the deliberate, planned—utilization of evaluation findings for future decision making—can have the following effects:

- Organizational learning, the ability of organizations to use data to constantly improve practice;
 - Program growth and improvement, the systematic use of data to strategically expand programs in areas where needs can be met; and
 - Grantsmaking, using evaluation findings to support future requests for funding.
- **Comprehensive programs such as the Community Consortia provide laboratories for developing and modeling effective practices.**

Often in the past, grants programs, whether of government agencies, private foundations, or other nonprofits, have diffused their resources across diverse areas of program emphasis, need, or client base. While this has helped achieve breadth of impact, it has frequently prevented the grantmakers from acquiring any systematic knowledge of the cumulative effects of their programs. Increasingly, funders have sought methods for gauging these cumulative effects.

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Programs like the Community Consortium, the Chicago Arts Partnerships (CAPE), and the Charlotte, NC, Cultural Education Collaborative provide integrated systems of individual projects that, though autonomous, are impelled by a common vision, creating the opportunity for gauging these overall program effects.

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Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis, the following recommendations are offered to the Washington State Arts Commission:

- Preserve, and if possible, increase the Community Consortium Program through continuation of its state funding and through alternative funding sources, if available. This program should not be cut; rather, it should be expanded. At its best (that is, at the sites where it is most effective), the program is bringing about precisely the changes that schools need in order to meet the Essential Learning Requirements.
- Revise the Consortium Guidelines to increase the emphasis on careful alignment of standards, curriculum, training, instruction, assessment, documentation, dissemination of results, and use of evaluation in program improvement.
- Develop a database or website of effective practices and technical assistance, based on the most promising program results, as an aid to consortia that are at more of an intermediate stage of program success. The program's vision to fundamentally change teaching practices through partnerships and mentoring is being realized, and the lessons learned from that experience should be made widely available.
- Conduct additional research, especially on the results of Consortium schools in meeting the Essential Learning Requirements.

Conclusion

The Community Consortium Program is building a vast statewide structure that may serve a timely role as the state of Washington implements its essential learnings in the arts. The critical elements for standards-based reform are in place in many of its sites.

WSAC now has the opportunity to further activate this structure by instituting processes for knowledge sharing, cross-fertilization, and statewide professional development of teachers, artists, and administrators in the important learnings emanating from the most effective program sites.

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If the Commission succeeds in doing this, it will help codify what is already a mosaic of interconnected knowledge, learning, and effective educational practice; strengthen its interconnections; and mobilize it to make fundamental, statewide progress in meeting the standards for what all Washington children should know and be able to do.

The Evaluation Process

Focusing the Evaluation: Forming Questions from Goals

As noted, an evaluation should be guided by the program's goals, since these statements describe the *outcomes* or *impacts* that an evaluation should look for, and whose presence would indicate that the program is effective. In this evaluation, the goals are used to generate specific questions, whose answers should reveal whether the outcomes or impacts are present. In essence, the questions "unpack" the goals and make them more measurable.⁵ The following table presents these questions in relation to the goals:

Program Goals and Guiding Questions

Goal	Question
Encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public school/s and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education (i.e. public detention centers, hospitals).	Are EALRs being implemented effectively in partner schools and other sites in the community?
Encourage full utilization of local resources by supporting partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Are local resources being used fully?▪ Are partnerships in place and functioning effectively?
Help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students.	Are communities developing such programming?
Develop local arts education expertise, when applicable, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects.	Is local expertise in place?
Support programming that will be sustained through time, will grow, improve, attract other funding sources, and in applicable cases expand.	Is local programming sustainable and capable of growth?

⁵ Readers will recognize these questions as similar to the major questions that head each chapter, where they are modified for clarity.

Beyond a Program's Goals

There is a sense in which a program's goals are not the only sources of evaluation guidance. Programs function in a larger body of generative, nationally-significant effective practices. Thus it is important to also ask:

To what extent do project findings reflect national trends and best practices?

From Questions to Indicators

The guiding questions were not in themselves sufficient to frame the evaluation. It was also necessary to identify indicators that would help answer the questions. An indicator is any observable event, fact, or condition that provides the answer to one of the questions. Indicators are highly empirical—that is, they are verifiable by independent observation and not merely speculation or theory. The following table again lists the goals and questions, along with the indicators necessary to answer the questions:

Example

The following example, which uses one of the program's goals, demonstrates this process:

Goal	Question	Indicators
Encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public school/s and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education (i.e. public detention centers, hospitals).	Are EALRs being implemented effectively in partner schools and other sites in the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lesson plans, supporting materials (e.g., teacher guides), documentation provide evidence of EALRs.▪ Grants address a variety of appropriate partner sites in the community.

The following table lists all the goals, questions, and indicators:

Goals, Guiding Questions, and Indicators

Goal	Question	Indicator
Encourage and support a community's capacity to implement the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts in local public school/s and other non-parochial facilities in which pre-K through 12 youth receive their education (i.e. public detention centers, hospitals).	Are EALRs being implemented effectively in partner schools and other sites in the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lesson plans, teacher guides, and other learning materials. incorporate the EALRs in their design.▪ Meaningful connections link curricula, units, and lessons to EALRs'.▪ Grants address a variety of appropriate partner sites in the community.
Encourage full utilization of local	▪ Are local resources	▪ Grant applications and final reports

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resources by supporting partnerships of educators, artists, arts organizations and local arts agencies, parents, businesses, and other community members.	being used fully? ▪ Are partnerships in place and functioning effectively?	describe extensive use of local resources. ▪ Grant applications and final reports describe partnership characteristics.
Help communities develop strong arts education programming that meets the specific needs of their local public school students.	Are communities developing such programming?	▪ Applications and final reports describe emergent programming, connecting it to needs. ▪ Needs are identified through credible processes.
Develop local arts education expertise, when applicable, by supporting mentoring as a part of consortia projects.	Is local expertise in place?	▪ Applications and final reports describe results of mentoring processes.
Support programming that will be sustained through time, will grow, improve, attract other funding sources, and in applicable cases expand.	Is local programming sustainable and capable of growth?	▪ Applications and final reports describe use of data to improve programs. ▪ Applications and final reports describe the growth of community support and additional funding.
(Since this is not related to the program's goals, this cell is blank.)	To what extent does the program reflect findings from other research?	Project findings reflect national trends and best practices.

Indicators and Documentation

To obtain the evidence of indicators, the evaluation involved extensive review of program materials, including grant applications, final reports, and other documents.

Documentation Components of Grant Applications/Final Reports

Curricula, lesson plans
Lesson components: teacher guides, work books, etc.
Narrative descriptions
Publicity and press clippings
Student work products: writing, artworks, test scores
Testimony from surveys and interviews

The emphasis throughout this evaluation has been on conducting a thorough and rigorous analysis of actual data in the form of documents, artifacts, and products of the program. There has been a consistent practice to rule out primarily anecdotal data where it has seemed to be speculative, in favor of data that cited actual observations.

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The Grants Analysis Worksheet

A number of tools or instruments were developed for analyzing the data from reports and other documents, including a variety of rubrics. A key tool in the analysis of data was the Grants Analysis Worksheet. A separate worksheet was developed for each of the 27 separate grantees under the program. Each worksheet was used to analyze final reports, supporting attachments, and applications for documentation that provides evidence of the indicators.

Other Evaluation Processes: Compilation of Numerical Data

In addition to the primarily qualitative analyses of grants final reports, applications, and attached documents, the evaluation also looked at the various consortia numerically, using compilations of data from the Worksheets.

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About the Author

Michael E. Sikes, Ph.D., is a consultant who designs and evaluates education programs and learning systems. He currently works with school districts, organizations, and state agencies in California, Colorado, Idaho, North Carolina, Ohio, and Washington State.

In 1996, Sikes and Pattian Frinzi conducted an evaluation of the then-existing AIE grants program. The report of that evaluation *Fertile Ground: A Report on Arts Education*, noted that the state of Washington possessed a rare combination of community resources and schools with needs. The communities offered tremendous potential for the effective use of grants that could pair schools, especially in rural and isolated communities, with cultural organizations and artists.

Sikes and Frinzi also developed the Evaluation Took Kit®, which has served as a key process aid in the ongoing assessment of the Community Consortium Program.